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## Senior Soviet Officers Taking Polish Army Jobs

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Senior Soviet officers are being inserted quietly into key posts throughout the Polish armed forces, according to Western intelligence sources.

Some of the officers, particularly generals, wear their regular uniforms, the sources say, but others are in Polish military uniforms so as to be less obvious to outsiders.

Their assignment is believed to be to look over the shoulders of Polish officers both to offer suggestions and to be in position to try to prevent the Poles from getting together to resist a Russian invasion, should it come.

"We saw the same pattern in the summer of 1968 in Czechoslovakia before the invasion, and again in the fall of last year in Afghanistan," one American official said.

U.S. and other Western analysts, however, do not conclude from this development that the Soviet Union has made a decision to invade Poland. Rather, many of them think the Russians made a tentative decision to stage a massive military exercise in Poland, were talked out of it, and now maintain their military options at a high state of readiness while closely monitoring political events in Warsaw.

This hypothesis, based on a combination of hard intelligence, fragmentary evidence, hearsay and considerable conjecture, goes something like this:

A tentative decision was made in late November to stage a Warsaw Pact exercise in Poland sometime between Dec. 7 and 10. To be included were all 15 Polish divisions, about 20 Soviet divisions and a variety of Czech and other Warsaw Pact forces.

Western intelligence picked up a series of specific preparations pointing to that time period. They believed the Russians were following a checklist of preparations, in-

cluding moving command posts to forward positions along the border, stockpiling ammunition and fuel, setting up a mobile field hospital and fleshing out units with reservists from civilian life. These and similar measures were taken in Russia, Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

The exercise was to be used as a ruse to neutralize Polish forces so that, by the time they realized it actually represented an invasion, it would have been too late for large-scale resistance by organized units, the analysts figure.

But Polish Communist Party leader Stanislaw Kania and others warned that the stratagem would not work, that a bloodbath would result.

So an unusual Warsaw Pact summit was called in Moscow on Dec. 5. Arguing for a go-ahead were some Soviet hardliners who felt events in Poland already were beyond control, backed by the East Germans and Czechs, who were very nervous about the spillover effect in their societies.

Countering with arguments about the heavy price of such a move, besides the Polish leaders, were some Kremlin officials backed by the Hungarians, Romanians and Bulgarians. Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, according to Eastern European sources, is said to have played an essentially neutral role.

The argument to give Polish authorities more time to rectify the mistakes of the past, to contain the independent labor movement and to encourage moderation on the part of the Catholic Church, union leaders and intellectuals reportedly won the day.

But it was decided to maintain the high rate of military preparations all around Poland in case widespread strikes, riots or clashes with authorities should call for quick intervention. And large number of Soviet officers were slipped into Poland.